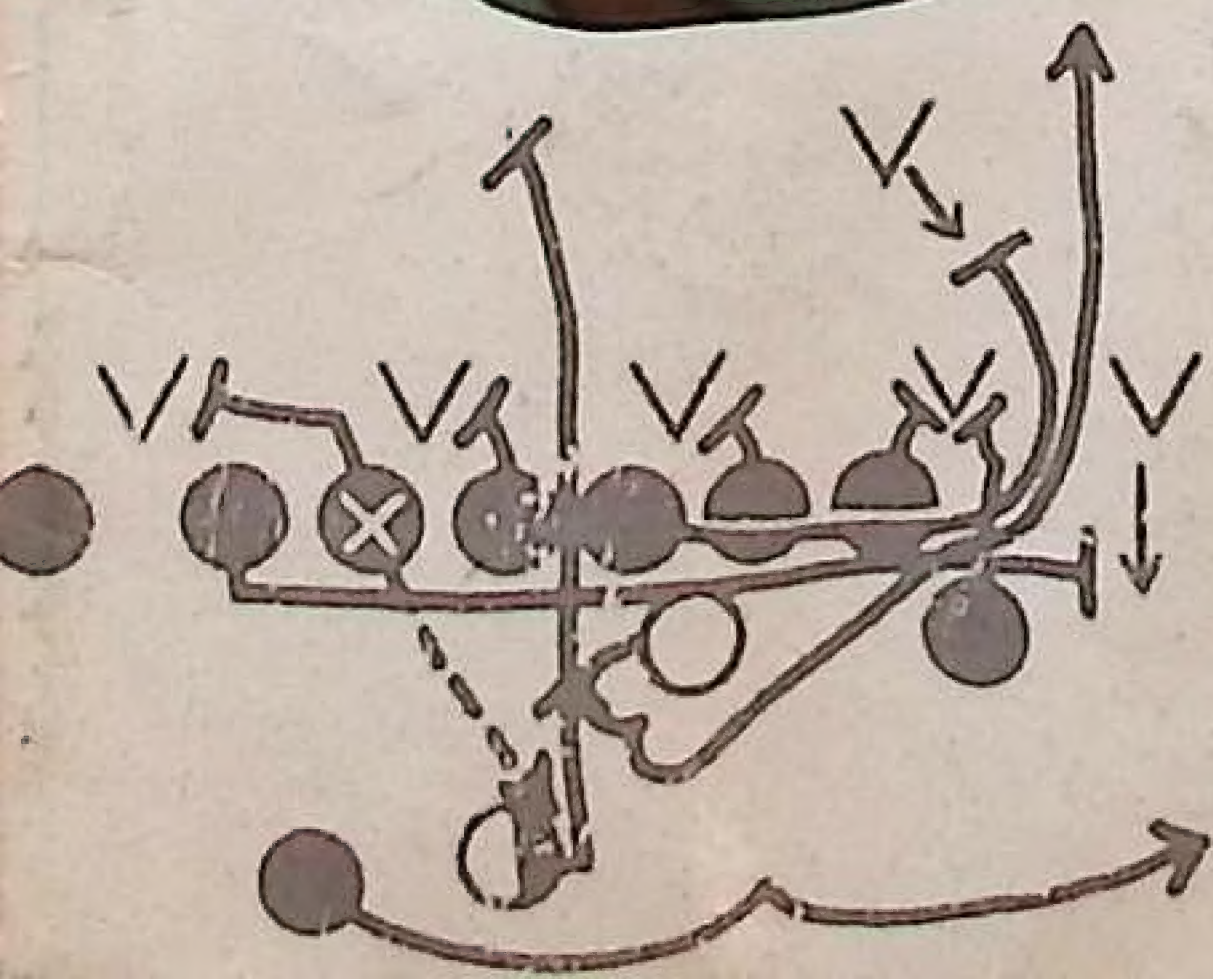
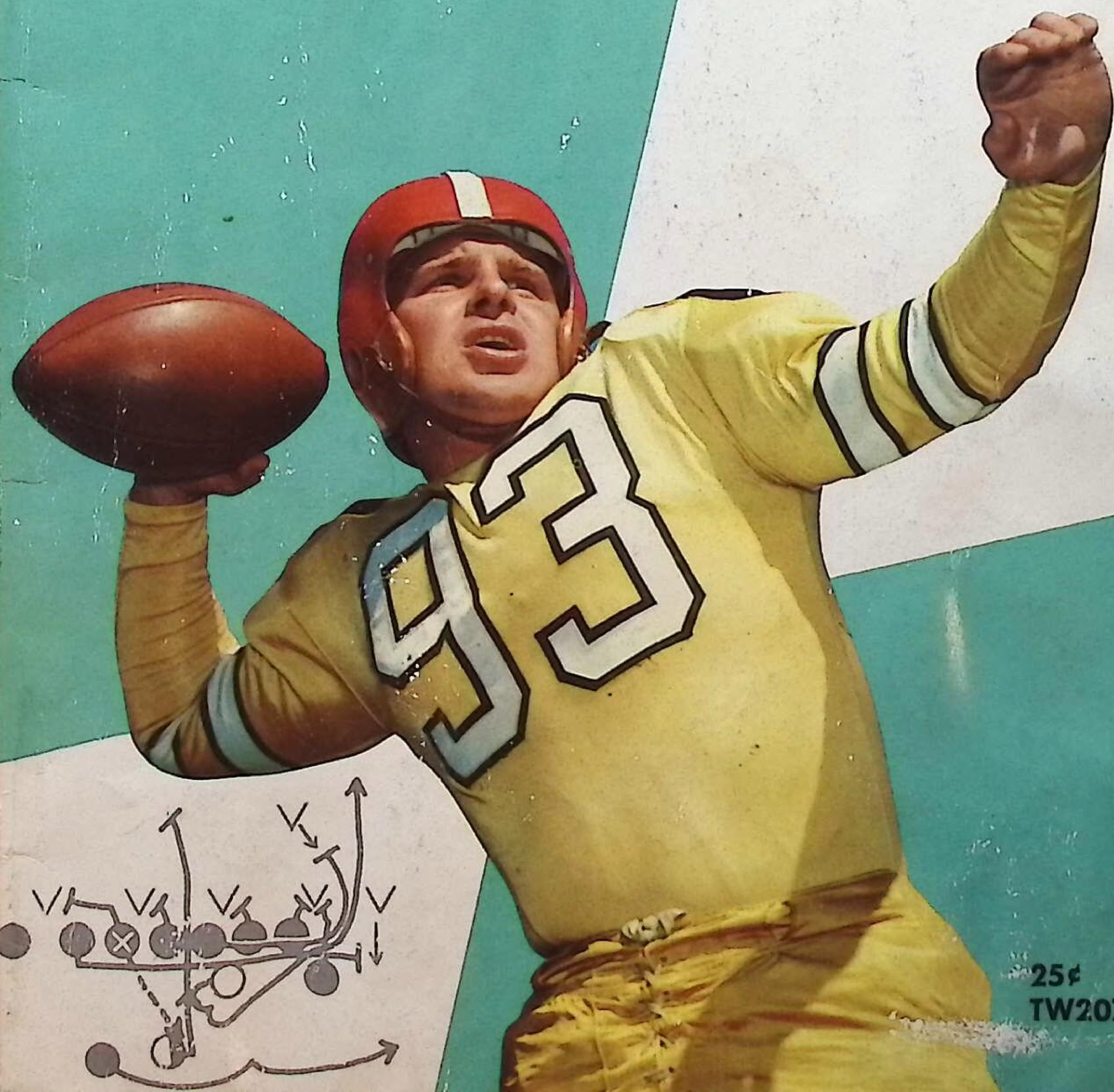


HOW TO STAR IN

FOOTBALL



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Photos by Owen Reed at Princeton University
and the University of Oklahoma

Designed by
CHARLES HURLEY



HOW TO STAR IN

FOOTBALL

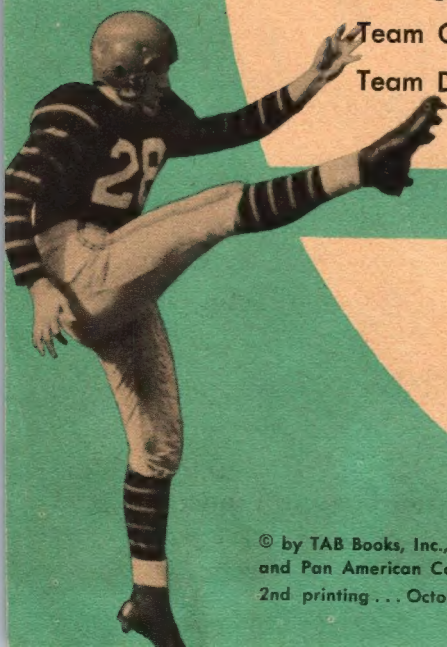
By **HERMAN L. MASIN**



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THE LINE-UP

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Condition Counts

FOOTBALL is the toughest team game there is. Don't make it tougher by going into a season "soft." Peak performance demands peak condition. You can't play a full game at top speed without it. So there's your first must — get into top shape.

But don't try to do it in one day. Build your body gradually. That's the way to avoid strains and stiff muscles.

One of the best ways of developing your body is through body-building exercises. Here's a good system every player on any level of play can use.

1. Start every practice by jogging two laps around the field, running the second lap faster than the first and finishing with a sprint.
2. Do six chin-ups a day in early season. Later on, do 10 or 12.
3. Squat like a baseball catcher, extending the arms forward. Rise on toes to full height, and repeat 10 times.
4. Lie on back with legs fully extended. Bring legs up to a right angle with the body. Then lower gradually, keeping legs straight and feet together, until heels are two inches off ground. Hold for five counts, then repeat about 10 times.
5. From the same position with the hands under the back supporting the body, do about 50 bicycle pedals.
6. Standing with the feet wide apart, knees straight and arms extended sideways, bend at the waist, touching the left foot with the right hand. Then swing the left hand over to touch the right foot. Touch each foot about 25 times with the opposite hand, keeping the arms straight.

In addition to exercise, your body needs a well-balanced diet. It needs the proper foods in the proper amounts for energy, strength, growth, and the repair of tissue.

Here are some tips on what to eat: Fruit juices, cereals, eggs (scrambled or boiled), milk, vegetables, lean meat, fish, ice cream (not too much), and bread (preferably toasted).

The food mother prepares is okay. Just have her boil or roast your meat. Fried foods are hard to digest and are tough on the wind. That also holds true for greasy foods, gravy, pickles, ketchup, and other highly seasoned items.

Don't eat between meals. Have three regular meals at regular times. If you feel hungry in the evening, have a glass of milk or a dish of plain ice cream. A milk shake or a dish of cereal with fruit will also do fine.

An orange or a good big apple is swell after a workout.

Eat at least two hours before working out. Eat slowly. Don't bolt your food down and rush out to practice. It's better to leave the table feeling slightly hungry than to leave feeling stuffed.

OTHER TIPS ON CONDITIONING:

SLEEP:

At least nine hours every night in a quiet airy room.

SHOWERING:

Take a shower after every workout. Avoid too much hot water. Finish with a quick burst of cold water. Rub well with your towel, making sure to dry thoroughly between the toes. Don't leave the locker room until your hair is dry.

INJURIES:

Report all scratches and injuries to your coach or parents immediately. Any little scratch, if not attended to, may become infected.

WARMING UP:

Every time you go out on the field, warm up thoroughly. Wear the proper clothing and take care in dressing and keeping your equipment in good shape.

Never practice until exhausted. Quit soon as you feel you've had all you can take. Gradually build up to a point where you can play a full game.

AFTER A GAME:

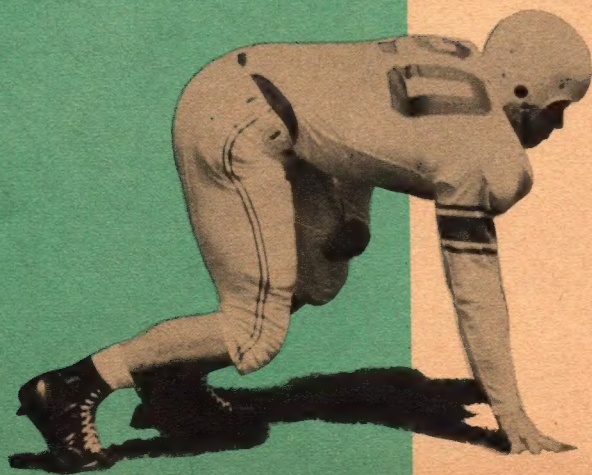
Wait at least an hour before eating. Go home and relax for a while until the excitement wears off. If you're very tired or banged up, retire early. Sleep is the best medicine for weariness.

Always remember that football is a great game *only* for the boy who plays it hard and clean. When played any other way, it ceases to be a sport and it ceases to have value. You'll find that it pays to stick to the rules regardless of what the opponents do. This is the test of the true sportsman and team player.

Okay, now, let's get into the ball game!

Backfield Play

YOU can't move correctly if you don't stand correctly. So, to assure the fastest possible get-away, make sure to set up properly. The correct stance will depend upon the type of offense you use. Here are some of the more popular stances. Take your choice (with the advice of your coach).



Sprinter's Stance



Two-Point Stance

Sprinter's Stance (used mostly with Split T): Line up with the feet only 6 to 8 inches apart, with one foot slightly back of the heel of the other. If the right foot is dropped back, place your left hand on the ground. If the left foot is back, place your right hand on the ground.

Place the "down" hand on a line just inside the rear foot, with the hand resting on the second knuckles. Drape the other forearm across the front thigh, just above the knee. Get up on the balls of your feet and throw most of your weight forward on the "down" hand.

Keep the tail higher than the shoulders, the head and eyes up, and the shoulders square to the line of scrimmage. As you can quickly see, you're all set to explode forward.

General Three-Point Stance: Place the feet about 24 inches apart, parallel to each other and pointing straight ahead. The toes may be on line with each other, or the toe of one foot may be on line with the heel of the other.

Now place the hand opposite the front foot on the ground, and lay the other arm across the front thigh, just above the knee. Bend the knees, keep the head up, and rest the weight over the balls of the feet.

Two-Point Stance (usually used by fullbacks in the T, or halfbacks in the single wing): Place the feet about 18 inches apart, with the toes pointing straight ahead. Once again the square or the staggered foot position may be used.

But, this time, place the hands on the knees, with the thumbs on the inside. Keep the head up and look straight ahead or at the ball. Also make sure to keep the feet flat on the ground with the body weight resting on the balls of the feet — not on the heels.

Receiving the Ball: In the single wing, the ball is snapped either to the tailback or the fullback. If you play these positions, make sure to catch the snap with the hands limp and open.

Extend the fingers, keeping them apart and relaxed, and keep the arms slightly bent at the elbows. As the ball makes contact, let the hands and arms give a little toward the body.

Keep your eyes glued to the ball and keep your hands relaxed — not stiff. That's one of the greatest causes of fumbling.

Running with the Ball: Carry the ball firmly under the outside arm. Let the length of the ball rest along the inner forearm, with one point held firmly in the crook of the elbow and the other held firmly between the middle and index finger.

For security, press the elbow close to the body and exert slight pressure back toward the elbow with the gripping hand.

Allow the ball arm to swing easily back and forth along your body and not away from it.



STRAIGHT ARM AND CROSS-STEP

When smashing into the line, carry the ball against the stomach with one hand over the ball and the other hand underneath.

Pump the knees up high and keep the head up and the eyes open. Keep the weight forward — not back — and run hard, but look where you're going.

Use your interference. Stay behind it. If the hole is closed tight, slide to the left or right wherever you see daylight.

When tackled, protect the ball. Lower the shoulder and drive for the extra yard. *Relax* upon hitting the ground. Draw in the arms and legs and lower the chin to the chest. Try to keep the body in a ball and roll over naturally. Don't sprawl.

Straight Arm: While running with the ball, keep the free arm relaxed and swinging close to the body. As the



tackler comes up to you, shoot the free arm forward with the elbow rigid. But keep the wrist loose.

Aim your blow at the tackler's helmet, hitting it with the heel of your hand. The fault to avoid is keeping the arm relaxed with the elbow bent.

Cross-Over Step: As you straight-arm the tackler, draw your hips away and cross your inside leg over the other sharply and quickly.

Shoulder Dip: For that extra effort upon being tackled, lower your body, dipping the near shoulder into the opponent—keeping the arm bent and held rigidly to protect the leg from grasping hands. Ram right into the opponent and keep those legs moving hard.

Cutback: Let's suppose you're going to the right. Start with a short right step. Then cross-step with the left

while receiving the snap. Take another step or two (depending upon where the play is going).

As the right (outside) foot hits the ground, shove the ball under the right arm and drive hard off the planted foot, cutting back sharply into the line at about a 45° angle. The idea is to look straight ahead, then cut back suddenly before the opponents can shift to meet the play.

Change of Pace: Appear to run at full speed but hold some speed in reserve. As you reach the tackler and he reaches for you, put on the extra steam. When used with a sudden change of direction, this stunt can enable you to outrun the opponent.

Spinning: Single wing teams use all sorts of spins to fool the opponents while exchanging (or faking an exchange of) the ball. Let's look into the two most popular kinds of spin, assuming the play is going to the left.

Full Spin Left: Take a short step forward with the left foot. As the foot hits the ground and the weight shifts onto it, spin on the ball of the foot and let the right foot continue forward and around — turning the body.

Plant the right foot on a line with the left. Then as you shift the weight to this foot (right), pivot on it and at the same time bring the left foot around backwards — completing the full turn.

Then drive off the left foot and step with the right in the direction of the hole. The main point is to hide the ball by keeping the body between the ball and the defense. Keep the ball close to the body with the elbows

FULL SPIN LEFT



held firmly alongside the ribs. Whether you exchange the ball or not, carry out the spin fully. When done correctly, no one should be able to tell who has the ball.

Half-Spin Left: Take a short step forward with the left foot. As the weight comes over this foot, spin on the ball of the foot and bring the right foot forward and around a half turn. Then spin back and drive off the left foot — stepping off with the right in the direction of the hole.

Catching Punts: Glue your eyes on the ball, not the rushing opponents. In waiting for the kick, keep the knees slightly bent. As you move *forward* to make the catch, extend the arms to a position above the face. Keep the arms bent slightly and the palms turned upward and the thumbs turned outward. Let the arms and hands give as you make the catch. Bring the ball smoothly into your body and tuck it away before running upfield.

Using Your Interference: This isn't as easy as it sounds. Some players do it naturally. With others, it comes hard. The idea is to stay with your blockers as long as they're not interfering with your forward progress and are clearing the way. Try to avoid running laterally. Look for daylight and then cut sharply into it.

When running upfield, help your interferers by setting up their blocks with head-and-shoulder fakes and with fake changes of direction. If the situation is right, you may sometimes slow up a bit and let an interferer catch up and take out a defensive man directly in front of you.

NO back has more responsibilities than the quarterback in the T formation. Except for kicks, he handles the ball on every play. That means the success of every play depends squarely on the quarterback's ability to deliver the ball quickly and easily to the other backs.

Stance: Get up real close to the center. Keep the feet squarely on a line or one foot slightly behind the other. Spread them about 18 inches apart.



**T Formation
Quarterback**

Bend the knees slightly, keep the shoulders square and the head up, looking straight ahead. Let the weight rest over the balls of the feet. That means the heels of the feet barely touch the ground. If one foot is ahead of the other, the heel of the back foot will be off the ground.

It's tough telling you exactly how to place the hands under the center's crotch. Coaches have different ideas on this. But since Oklahoma is generally rated the nation's top T team year in and year out, we'll tell you how they do it.

The Oklahoma quarterback places his hands under the center with the heels of the hands together, fingers spread and pointed toward the ground. The hands are placed far enough up the center's crotch so that the second joints of the thumbs are in the middle of the pivot's crotch.

The quarterback puts pressure on the crotch with these joints. That tells the center exactly where to place the ball. He whips the ball fast and hard, placing the point into the heel of the quarterback's hands so that the laces fit down the middle of the quarterback's right hand — enabling him to secure an immediate passing grip.



Position of Hands

First Step: As the center charges, let your hands follow him and take a step up and out in the direction of the coming hand-off. This enables you to hand off quickly at the line of scrimmage.

As you take your first step up and out, concentrate on the far side of the halfback's mid-section. That's where you'll place the ball.

Make your second step as long as possible. At its end, you should be able to place the ball on target. You must *reach* for this exchange, extending your arm fully.

Holding Ball: While taking your first two steps, carry the ball at about the same height it was received. Start extending the ball during your second step.

Give the ball with one hand as close to the line as possible. Then take two more steps along the line, look



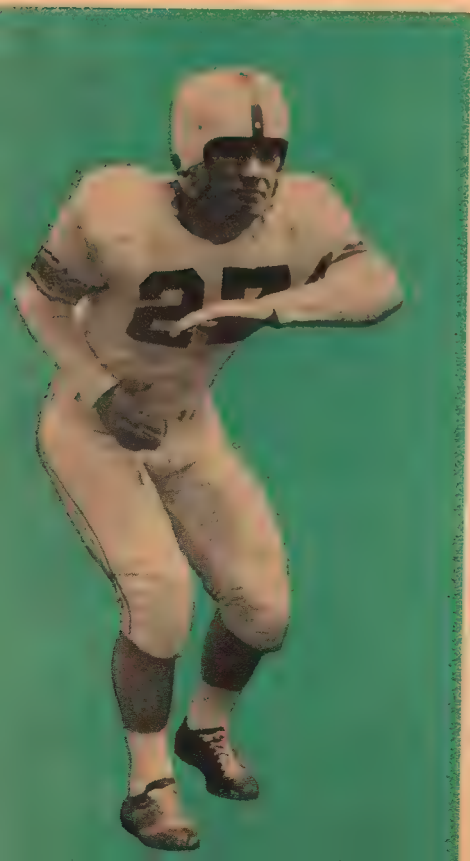
at the opposite halfback, fake a lateral to him, then turn up the field. Never follow the receiver with your eyes.

Receiving the Ball: The halfback starts straight forward as fast as possible and continues straight ahead until he feels the ball placed on his side. He drives with short choppy steps so that he can change direction quickly *after* getting the ball. He must learn to take the ball without looking at it.

As he reaches the hand-off area, he raises his inside elbow so that the arm is parallel with the ground with the forearm bent 90° at the elbow. The outside arm is carried just in front of the outside hip with the hand turned in slightly. The fingers are spread and curved naturally.

It's most essential to carry the outside hand alongside the hip so that the ball can be effectively grasped when the quarterback places it. The halfback simply clamps his hands on the ball as soon as he feels it against his body.

Option Play: Since this is the heart of Split T offense, let's take a close look at it. Let's assume you're the quarterback.



HALFBACK'S RECEIVING POSITION

Upon taking the snap, take your regular step up and out along the line. Watch the defensive end all the way. Don't bother faking to the plunging halfback. It's up to him to carry out the fake hand-off. You just watch that end.

Hold the ball in both hands, carrying it at the height most natural to you, swinging it from side to side.

If the end floats — doesn't come at you — fake a lateral to the halfback swinging around. Plant your back foot, then drive off this foot straight up the field.

If the defensive end comes barreling into you, make a soft, underhand, end-over-end flip to the halfback coming around.

HAND-OFF TO LEFT HALFBACK



RUNNING THE SPLIT T OPTION PLAY





Throw this pass blind, without looking back, with a simple wrist flip. Use little or no arm action.

If the end drives into you hard, drop your inside shoulder and turn it to the inside, so that you'll bounce off the man. If the end doesn't hit you, continue downfield as a blocker.

The success of the option play depends upon your ability to play the defensive end. You shouldn't worry about any faking or blocking. Just train your eyes on the end as quickly as possible, then react to his movements.

Your fullback should run past the end and block the defensive halfback, while the far halfback should move as fast as he can into position for the lateral.

Quarterback Strategy

1. Work harder than anyone else. Be an inspiration to your teammates.
2. Call signals and give your plays clearly and sharply.
3. Have confidence; believe in yourself.
4. Know your plays and your players so that you can always use the right man in the right spot.
5. Know who is making the tackles and figure out a way to stop him.
6. Have a special attack for the scoring zone, but don't change your offense if it has been going well. Keep using it until it's stopped.
7. Use plays which the defense doesn't expect.
8. Try to make at least five yards on the first play. Use your best plays on first down.
9. On rainy days, don't call many wide runs or throw too many passes. Use quick-opening and straight-away plays. With long yardage to go, kick on third down.

10. If your ends are covered by small men or if your fast men are taken by slow men, don't be bashful about passing to them.
11. Avoid running plays at the opponents' best men. If their strong offensive men are weak on defense, try to wear them down with running plays.
12. Don't gamble when ahead late in the game. Play safe, using good short gaining plays.
13. After a man has made a long gain or has been jolted pretty hard, don't use him on the next play.
14. When you must do or die on a certain play, use your best runner behind your best blocker.
15. Don't use a fake forward pass play until you've employed several "honest" pass plays. The "honest" stuff will set up the fakes.
16. A good time to pass is on second down with one or two yards to go. The defense is usually bunched for a buck. If you fail, you can always use a good short gainer on third down.
17. Don't spoil a weakness in the defense by aiming every play at it. The opponents will wisen up and strengthen it. Hit the weak spot only when necessary.
18. Against the wind, rush the ball as far as possible. Then kick low so that the ball rolls. With the wind, uncork your passing game.
19. When the defense bunches up, use wide plays. When it spreads, go through it.
20. Study the wind, sun, and field conditions. Always know the score, down, yards to go, time to play, physical condition of both your team and the opponents, what has worked before and what hasn't.

Above all, use your common sense.

BUCK-LATERAL PLAY FROM THE SINGLE-WING







Offensive Line Play

GOOD line play is based upon a good stance. You must master a position which enables you to move in any direction with speed and power. If you set up wrong, you'll never be able to pull out quickly or hit correctly.

Lineman Stance: Set up with your hips as high (or just a bit below) your shoulders with the back parallel to the

ground Keep the shoulders square to the line of scrimmage, and the head up with the neck "bulled."

Keep the legs bent at the knees, with the feet about shoulder-width or a bit less apart. Place one foot ahead of the other, the toe of the back foot being about on line with the heel of the other.

If the right foot is ahead, put the left hand on the ground on a line just inside the back foot. If the left foot is ahead, "ground" the right hand. Rest the hand on the second knuckles and the thumb.

The position of the free hand and arm is most important. Rest the front part of this forearm on the inside of the front thigh just above the knee, with the hand resting loosely inside of and slightly below the knee. If the hands are positioned correctly, the shoulders will take the right position — square to the line of scrimmage.

Make sure to keep the toes and knees pointed straight ahead. And keep most of the weight on the balls of the feet with pressure on the inside of the feet. Rest a little weight on the grounded hand.

Center Stance: Whether you're playing T or single wing, the stance remains practically the same. You may widen your foot spread a bit, and keep the left foot slightly in advance.

If you're playing T, grasp the ball with your right hand far enough toward the front so that the thumb comes across the top and the fingertips across the far axis, with the laces in your palm. Keep the left hand along the front or top of the ball solely for balance.

Your eyes are up in this stance, looking straight ahead, and your weight is kept forward. On the starting number,

“bang” the ball into the quarterback’s hand with one swift motion, and take a quick step forward.

If you’re playing single wing, grip the ball with your right hand as you would for a forward pass. Place the right hand under the forward point of the ball with either the thumb or the fingers gripping the laces. Place the guiding hand (left) along the top of the ball, with the fingers running almost parallel to the length. With the fingertips of this hand, apply just enough pressure to steady the ball.

Unlike the T stance, your weight is over the balls of the feet and your head is down, looking through your legs at the receiving back’s lower leg.

Spiral the ball back (as in forward passing) with a good wrist snap, letting the hands follow through between the legs.

If the receiver is going to run either left or right, deliver the ball with a little “lead,” enabling the receiver to catch it while in stride.

On a direct buck, float the ball to a spot directly in front of the ball-carrier, low enough to enable him to catch it without straightening up.

On spinner plays, snap the pass to a spot just outside the knee in the direction in which the back is going to spin.

Pulling Out of Line: If your assignment calls for you to pull out of the line to lead the ball-carrier, line up exactly as before. Don’t change your stance or you’ll give the play away.

On the snap, push off the knuckles of the grounded hand. At the same time, pivot on the inside foot and step down the line with the foot nearer the direction you want to go.

To gather speed in the spin-out, throw your shoulders and hips around so that you directly face the sideline.

In running, keep your head up, shoulders square, and pump your arms like a sprinter. Stay low — don't come erect — and run parallel to the line of scrimmage — unless your assignment calls for you to go deep.

Blocking

NO matter what kind of offense you use, you'll make it go if you can block. It's the heart of offensive football — more important than fancy plays.

The main idea in blocking is to get your body between the opponent and the ball-carrier and keep it there.

Rule No. 1 is to assume an easy, natural stance — one that will enable you to start quickly in any direction. The stance shown in the chapter on Offensive Line Play is the one to use.

Sometimes you'll be asked to knock your man down. Most of the time you'll just be required to move him back or to the side. So long as you build a "fence" between him and the ball-carrier, you'll be doing some good.

The elements of all good blocking are: (1) eyes on the target, (2) head up, (3) tail low, (4) back straight, (5) arms close to the body, (6) quick start, (7) wide base once contact is made, (8) keep close to opponent, and (9) keep legs moving with short, digging steps.

Now let's describe some of the basic blocks.



REVERSE BODY BLOCK





HEAD AND SHOULDER BLOCK



Head-and-Shoulder Block: Take a short step with either foot and aim your forehead straight at the opponent's belt buckle. Uncoil your body and lunge straight into the men, driving off both feet.

When an inch or so from contact, slide your head by him into his left side (if the play is going to the right), and pinch him with your head and shoulder.

Bring your left forearm up (with hand on chest) to broaden your blocking surface, keeping your tail low and legs wide.

To move him to the left, bring your outside foot well up on the outside of the opponent's hips and drive hard and fast with short jabbing steps. At this point, you can straighten up, sliding the contact from the belt to the man's armpits.

Reverse Body Block: When you get close enough to block, take one more step, planting a foot directly in front of your opponent. Pivot sharply on the forward foot and drive the opposite shoulder across the front of the man's numbers.

Then whip your hips around high and fast across the opponent's lower chest or waist. For balance, drop the away hand on the ground. But once contact is made, go to all fours and drive sideways—keeping contact with the man. Or you may extend your body full length and roll into the opponent's body.

Double-Team Block: As the title tells you, two men are needed for this block—a post man to set up the opponent, and a drive man to supply the power.

On the snap of the ball, the post man steps forward

DOUBLE-TEAM BLOCK



with his inside foot just hard enough to break the opponent's charge. The driver steps with his inside foot, immediately closing any gap between himself and the post. He then continues to charge along this line until he makes contact.

The post swings his shoulders and hips around so that they stay in close contact with the driver. He doesn't bother moving the opponent. His only interest is keeping him from slipping by on either side.

As in the shoulder block, the post's head is up, forearm extended, and neck bulled.

Meanwhile, the driver continues his charge with short, chugging steps, taking longer steps with his outside foot. This enables him to move the opponent laterally along the line of scrimmage, instead of straight back.

If the post man stays close to the opponent (his only assignment), it's easy for the driver to pressure the man in the desired direction.

Blocking for the Passer: Since your passing attack is a vital part of your offense, every man on the team must learn how to protect the passer. The type of block to use depends upon several factors—the position you play, the type of pass, the position of your opponent, etc. But here are the general rules to follow:

1. Make sure to know the exact spot from which your passer will throw the ball.

2. Know what kind of pass he will throw, that is:

- (a) a quick pass.
- (b) a normal pass.
- (c) a short throw.
- (d) an end-run pass.

(e) a roll-out pass, where your quarterback rolls out behind several interferers.

(f) a fake off a run.

3. Know for how long (counts) the opponent must be checked. Most passes are tossed within about three seconds (five counts) after the snap from center.

4. Know the direction in which the ball will be tossed so that you can move over and tackle anyone intercepting it.

5. Be tough and determined to protect your thrower.

6. Always assume and keep the important inside angle on your opponent.

7. Step back and look your opponent straight in the eye, making him show the direction in which he'll charge.

8. Once you contact your man, stay with him by keeping your feet spread, base wide, and head high and across the man's chest.

9. If at the last minute you find the opponent slipping away, be ready to go into a reverse body block.

10. Once the ball is thrown, move toward it, putting yourself in position to make the tackle if the ball is intercepted. This is known as "covering" the pass.

Always remember that an interception of a pass is as bad or worse than a fumble.



Defensive Line Play

MOST coaches have their own ideas on line play. Chances are no two systems are exactly alike. Then, again, you must remember that line play changes according to the offense you're facing, and the situation — down, score, position on the field, etc.

What we'll try to do here is give you some general tips that will help improve your game no matter what kind of defensive system your coach uses.

Stance: Either a 3-point (with one hand on the ground) or 4-point (both hands on the



ground) may be used. Both are effective. But since almost every team uses a 3-point stance on offense, it may be simpler to stick to that stance on defense.

Spread the feet about shoulder-width (or a bit wider) apart, with one foot back on line with the instep or heel of the other. Place weight evenly over balls of feet.

Now do a deep knee bend. Then place a hand on the ground — the hand opposite the forward foot. Place the hand on a line about $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet just inside the back foot. Place just enough weight on the hand so that you'll fall if it's lifted.

Then raise the hips slightly until the back is almost parallel to the ground. Keep the shoulders perfectly square to the line, and allow the free forearm to rest comfortably across inside of the thigh. Keep head and eyes up.

You're now ready to charge forward instantly.

Following are several stunts which will enable you to protect yourself and get through to the backfield.

Shoulder Charge: Take a short step forward with the front foot. At the same time, start moving the rear foot and shoot your body out in front of the forward foot.

Dip your shoulder to get under the opponent, and drive your near shoulder under the opponent's near shoulder. Make this charge fast and hard. Continue driving with short, hard steps, forcing your way across the line.

Soon as you accomplish this, use your hands and arms to get rid of the opponent and pursue the ball-carrier.

Hand Shiver: Take a short step forward with the front foot. The instant both feet are on the ground, uncoil your body quickly and shoot your hands and arms forward sharply.

With the heels of your hands, contact a spot just under the opponent's shoulders. Drive the hands forward so that the arms straighten out. This will stop the opponent and straighten him out.

Forearm Shiver: This is done in much the same manner, but usually with just one arm. Bring the back foot up until it's in line with the other, and uncoil the body.

Then raise the grounded hand and whip it forward with as much force as possible. Drive the forearm at a spot just below the numbers on the opponent's jersey. At the same time, drive the opposite hand underneath the shoulder, much as before.

If done correctly, your follow-through with the forearm will raise the opponent and drive him back.

What you're doing in all these charges is: (1) charging with the snap, (2) protecting yourself, (3) protecting your territory, (4) moving with the ball, and (5) getting into position for the tackle.

Submarine: On the snap, fake a high charge with an upward head feint. At the same time, shoot forward off the front foot and drive your shoulder across the line — hitting just above the opponent's ankles.

At this moment, the front foot is well up under the body, the two hands are grounded in the line of scrimmage, the chest is directly over the hands, and the head is lifting upward.

Next, lift with your body, push up with the hands, raise the head, bring the legs up under you, and drive with short, sharp jabbing steps.

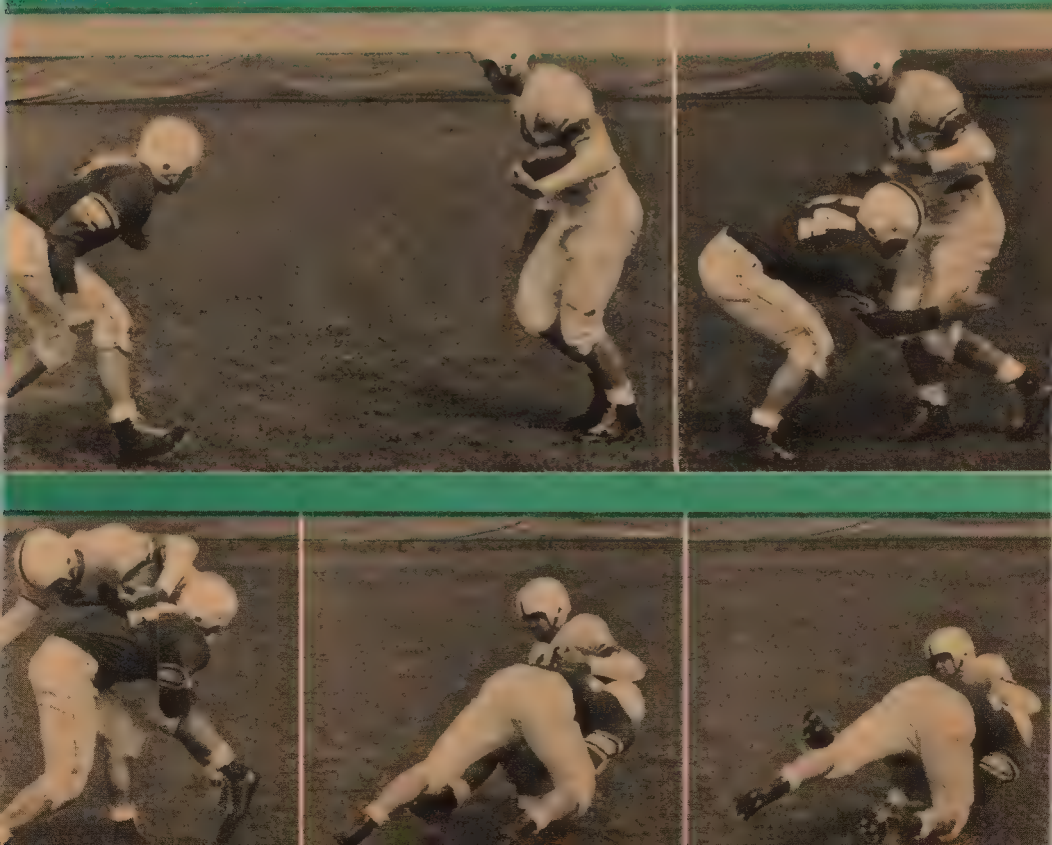
Faults to avoid are lunging flat on the ground and not getting up quick enough, and dropping to the turf on all fours and staying there with head down and tail up.

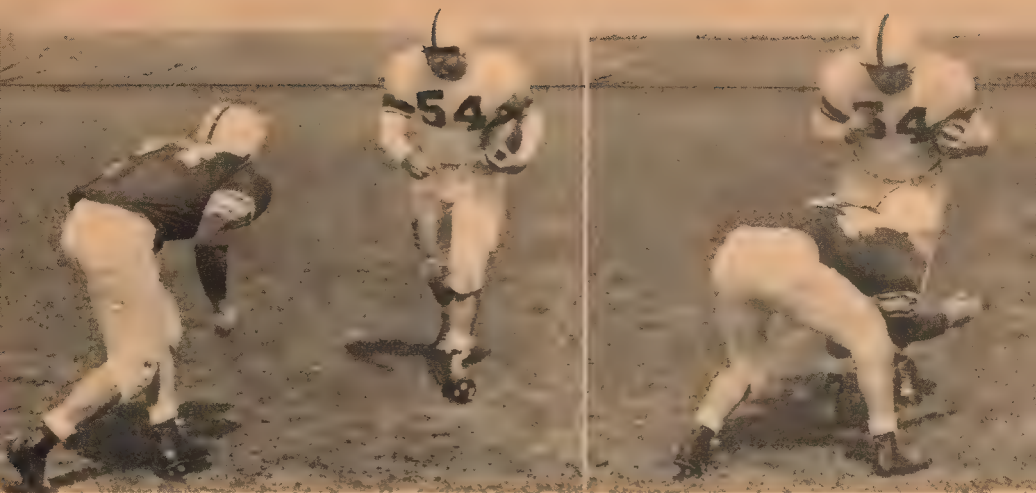
Tackling

Hard, deadly tackling is the greatest defensive weapon in the game. Coaches will always find a spot for fellows who can “hit” a ball-carrier and make it stick. There are three basic types of tackles, which should be mastered by every man on the team.

Head and Shoulder: Used mostly by linemen and linebackers when the runner is driving straight at them.

Head and Shoulder Tackle





Move in quickly and widen your base. Keep the head up and the eyes on the ball-carrier's middle. Bend the knees and extend the arms in front of you, with the weight over the front knee.

As the opponent comes up to you, step forward with the nearer foot and drive the near shoulder into the man's middle or thighs. Shoot your head to one side, move in close, throw your arms around his legs and pull them toward you. Lift with your arms and dump him backward. Always keep pushing forward with short, driving steps.

If you've done everything correctly, you should wind up spread-eagled over the ball-carrier with your shoulder on top of his middle.

Side Tackle: Figure the speed of the ball-carrier, then run in a straight line to the spot at which you'll meet. Keep your feet under you until you get close. Then drive your near shoulder into the man's side, with your head across his chest or waist.

As contact is made, wrap your arms around his waist



SIDE TACKLE



or knees, squeeze them tightly, and continue driving until you dump him.

Rear Tackle: As you approach from the rear, get in close and drive your shoulder into the opponent's back. Wrap your arms around his legs and dump him to the ground.

Make sure to get in close and aim rather high. That means if you miss him, you may grab something further down. Whatever you do, don't leave your feet too soon. If you dive at his legs, you may wind up with nothing but the air.

If you make your move from in close, you'll be sure of making contact. And even if you don't make a perfect tackle, you'll at least slow up the runner and permit a teammate to reach him.

Tackling Tips: Keep head up and weight forward. Watch the carrier's waist. Never drop the head, and keep the eyes open. Move in crisply, hit with the shoulder and lift the legs as you wrap your arms around the opponent's legs. On a side tackle, always cross the opponent's path with your head and shoulders.

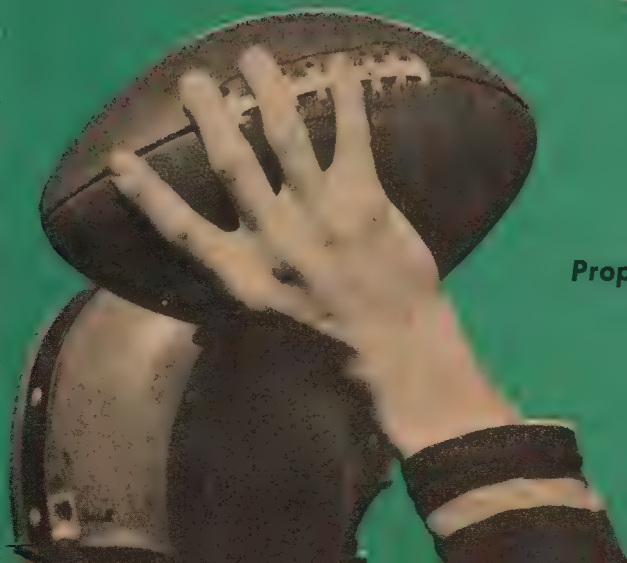


MOST great passers have a lot of natural ability. But almost anyone can learn to pass well enough with study and practice.

What are the qualities of a good passer? He must stay cool under pressure. He must know when or where to fake, when to hold the ball and run, when to "eat" the ball (be tackled instead of throwing to a covered receiver).

Forward Passing

Proper Grip





A PERFECT DELIVERY



He must also know every receiver's running patterns, be able to reckon exactly when the receiver will get open and throw the ball at that time — not before.

But, first and most important of all, he must know HOW to throw the ball.

Grip: Grip the ball toward the rear end, with the fingers spread. Place three fingers on the lacing, keeping the thumb toward the back of the ball and the pinkie toward the other end.

As you glide back to position yourself, control the ball with both hands. Grasp the ball firmly with the passing hand, and lightly on the opposite side with the other (balance) hand.

Ready Position: Bring the ball up opposite the rear shoulder (with both hands). Keep under good control,



with the feet spread not wider than the shoulders, the knees slightly bent, and the weight over the balls of the feet.

Now remove the balance hand and cock the ball — without any motions or wind-ups — behind the rear shoulder on a line roughly with the ear.

Keep the elbow bent, with the upper arm almost parallel to the ground, and tilt the nose of the ball slightly up. Rest most of your weight on your rear foot.

Delivery: Step directly at your target and whip the ball with a free overhand motion. Let the weight flow from the rear to the front foot.

Snap the elbow downward, then snap the wrist downward so that the palm of the hand faces the ground. Release the ball a split-second after the left foot has been planted.

Follow-Through: Let the arm follow through naturally, continuing the forward and downward arm sweep, with the weight moving to the front foot.

This should bring your trunk in a direct line with the ball's flight, with the knees slightly bent.

Once the ball is on its way, take one step back and ward off any rushers with your hands. Then move in the direction of the pass. The idea is to keep between the ball and your goal line to protect against interceptions.

Try to deliver the ball at about head level, making the receiver reach for it. If the receiver is facing you, throw more on a line and aim at his chest.

Try to practice against rushing opponents. It's throwing under pressure that counts. Nearly everyone can throw a ball fairly accurately with no one rushing him.

Pass Receiving: Keep your eye on the ball while it's in flight, keeping your body between the ball and the opponent. Run as in sprinting with your arms pumping back and forth, keeping on your toes. Don't raise your arms to catch the ball until two or three strides from it.

Catch the ball with your fingertips and hands, not against the body. Keep the fingers relaxed and spread and the elbows bent.

If facing the receiver, catch any ball at or below your waist with the thumbs turned outward and the palms facing upward.

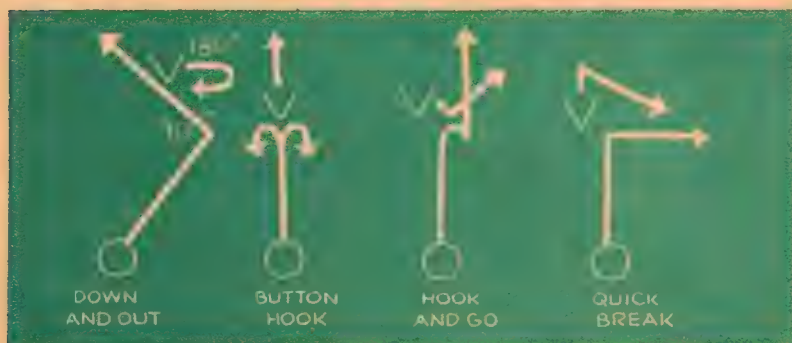
If the pass is chest high or higher, catch it with the thumbs turned inward and the palms away from the face.

When catching the ball on the run, take it with the thumbs turned out and the palms open toward you.

After catching the ball, bring it to your body, placing it under the arm opposite the nearest opponent, and run as fast as you can toward the goal.

Master a few good stunts to get you out in the open. Look at the "escapes" shown in the diagram.

Don't keep trying the same stunt over and over again. Mix 'em up — and you'll mix up the opponent.





GOOD punters are worth their weight in gold footballs. Not only can they punt your team out of danger again and again, but they can help your offense. How? By keeping the opponents deep in defensive territory until they make a mistake.

Stance: Set up in a balanced, relaxed semi-erect position, with the feet several inches apart — the kicking (right) foot a bit forward. Keep the knees slightly



Kicking

flexed and the body leaning just a bit forward.

Extend the arms as a target for the center, keeping them bent slightly at the elbow. Spread the fingers and keep them relaxed. Stiff arms and stiff fingers invite fumbling.

Upon receiving the ball, quickly finger it into position with the laces up. Keep the ball about waist high with the nose turned slightly inward.

Now take a short step forward with the right (front) foot in the direction of the punt. Then take a normal step with the left foot, again in the direction of the punt.

As the left foot comes forward, remove the balance (left) hand from the ball, then gently remove the right hand. Drop, do not shove, the ball to the kicking foot. Try to lay the ball across the instep of the foot.

Now bring the kicking foot forward with the knee bent. Whip the foot into the ball, keeping the knee bent until the ball approaches knee level. Then snap the leg out straight with the toe pointed down.

Contact the belly side of the ball. At contact, the right toe is fully extended — turned down and inward — with the knee locked.

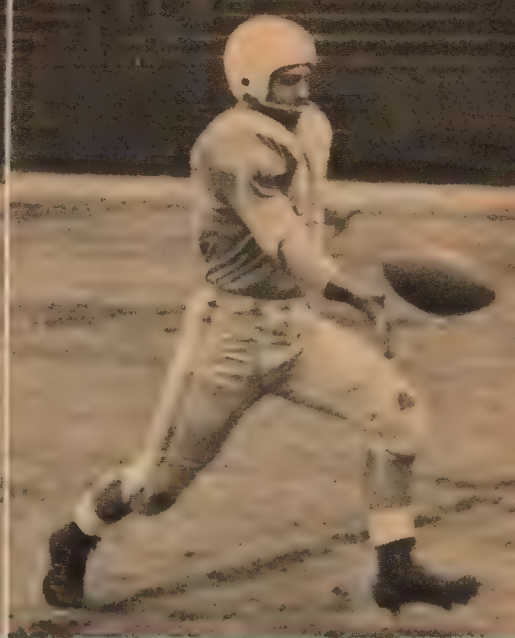
The idea is to meet the ball on the instep (not toe) at about knee height with a powerful whip and snap of the kicking foot.

Make sure the left foot is set solidly on the ground at contact. And keep the arms out for balance. Let the foot follow through naturally, ending overhead.

Keep the eyes on the ball from start to finish and end up on the toe. *Don't jump into the air.* If you've punted correctly, you should — after coming down — wind up in the same position as when you started.



PROPER KICKING FORM



Place Kick: If you're the ball-holder, set up on the side of the kicking foot, about seven yards behind the line, between the center and your right guard.

Keep your right foot forward, firmly planted on the ground, with the knee out. Place the other leg (left) on the ground, resting on the knee.

Now turn your body toward the center and extend your arms with the elbows bent, hands open, fingers relaxed, and thumbs turned in. Keep the hands about chest high to furnish a good target for the center.

Upon catching the ball, turn the laces to face the line so that the belly of the ball is facing the kicker. With both hands, quickly "spot" the ball about six inches directly opposite your left (grounded) knee. Place the ball straight up or down or inclined slightly toward the kicker.

Place the index finger of the left hand on the nose of the ball, then let go with the right hand. Keep your head down from start to finish.

The Kicker: Set up two steps behind the spot on which the ball will be placed. Keep the feet a little apart, with the kicking foot slightly advanced and on line with the kicking spot. Now train your eyes on that spot, and never pull them away until the kick is off.

As the ball is being placed on the ground, take one step with your kicking foot and another step with the other. Plant the left foot firmly on the ground just diagonally behind the ball.

Then swing the kicking foot forward so that the lower part of the leg snaps forward. Try to have the toe of the foot hit the middle seam at a point just below center about four inches from the ground.

Unlike punting, keep the ankle locked and stiff with the toe raised upward. And, remember, the ball is kicked with the toe, not the instep.

Kick-off: Use the same technique as for the place kick, except take a longer run (from 5 to 10 yards). Before kicking, pace back the same number of steps you will take.

Upon coming forward, run straight through the ball as you kick. Don't take any hops or skips. As first man down, you should make your share of the tackles.



Team Offense

THERE are almost as many offenses in football as there are coaches. No two coaches do everything exactly alike. Somewhere along the line they put in their own little twists.

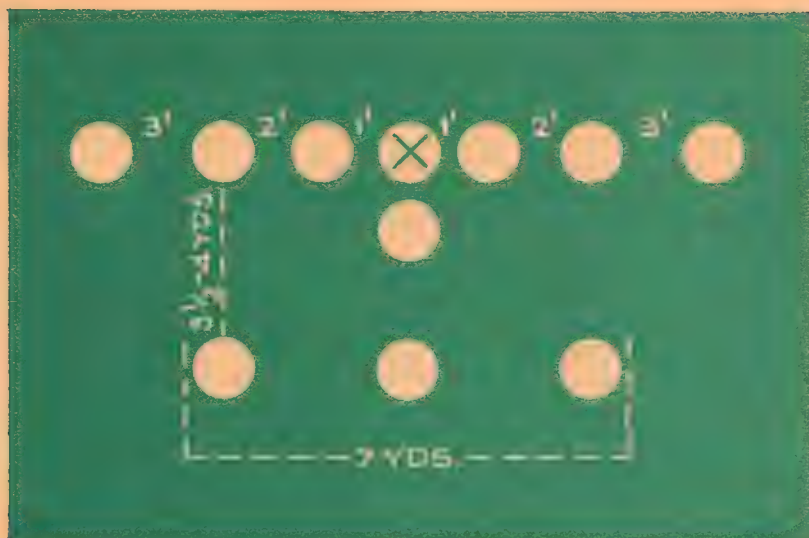
That's why it's so tough to give you a complete picture of team offense in a book of this size.

The offense your team uses should be based on the abilities of your team. And that's a problem for the coach to solve.

What we can do here is give you a general picture of the more popular systems of offense. Remember, that's all they are — general. Starting from these formations, your coach can put in "spread" ends, "flanked" backs, men in motion, and all the other fancy twists that coaches love.

The point to remember about offense is that it isn't so much what you do as the *way* that you do it. If your team can work together smoothly, with excellent timing; if your plays are sound; if you block well; if your running attack meshes nicely with your passing game; if you handle the ball well — it doesn't make too much difference what you use. You'll win your share of games.

Remember, too, don't try to use too many plays. A dozen or so plays, thoroughly mastered, are far superior to 40 or 50 only partly learned. Once you have the basic plays down pat, you can start slipping in the fancy extras.

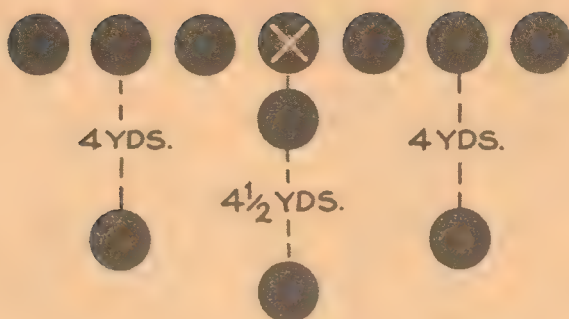


The Split **T**

THE Split T gets its name from the spacing of the linemen. All of them set up at varying distances from one another, as shown in the diagram. These splits spread the defensive linemen, giving the offense good blocking angles.

The halfbacks usually line up behind the tackles, while the fullback sets up back of the quarterback. Their distance from the line of scrimmage depends upon their speed. Slow men set up closer to the line to assure good timing on the hand-offs. As a rule, you'll find the backs anywhere from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 yards back.

Notice the spread between the halfbacks. This is often as much as 7 yards. That means they can hit any point in a 7-yard area with a straight-ahead smash.

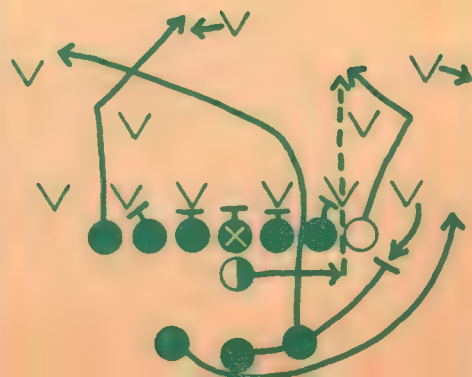
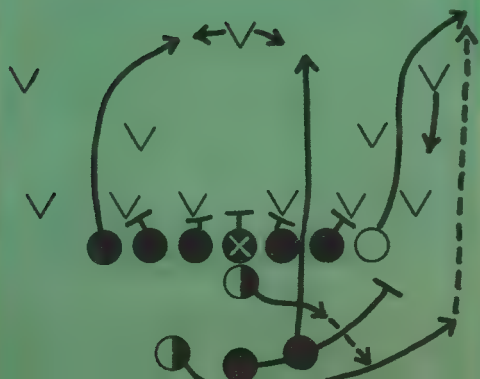
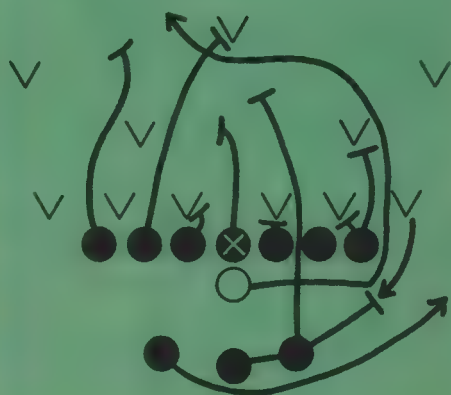
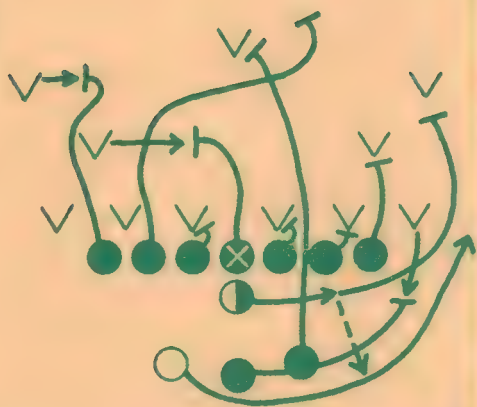
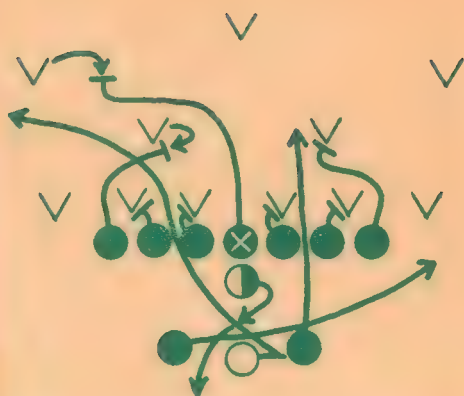
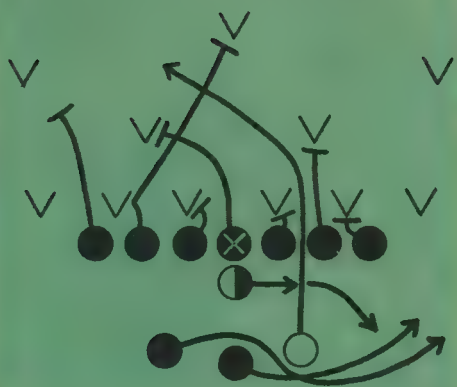


Regular **T**

THE T may be set up in various ways. The two most popular set-ups are: (1) with the line playing shoulder to shoulder, ends out a yard or so, or (2) with the line "loose." You may use a balanced line with three men on either side of center, or an unbalanced line with four men on one side of center and only two on the other.

The quarterback plays directly behind center, in the manner outlined in a previous chapter. The halfbacks set up about 4 yards behind the line at arm's distance from the fullback, who's a half yard farther back on line with the center.

Basic plays from the regular T follow.



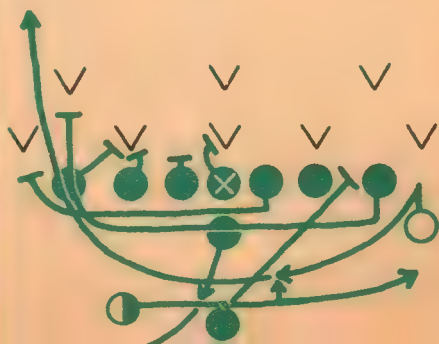
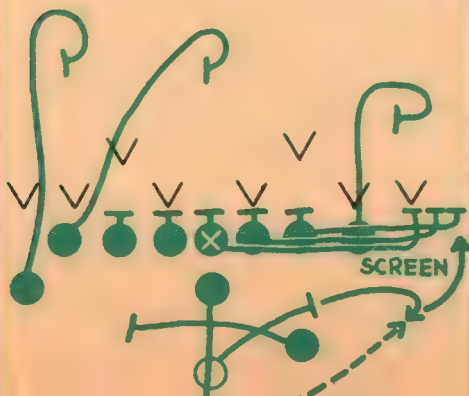
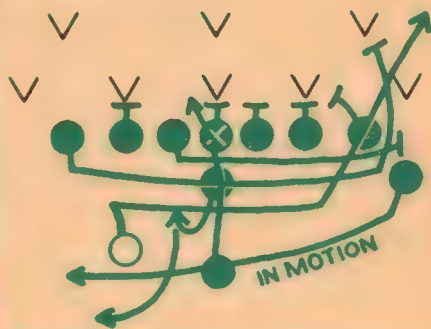
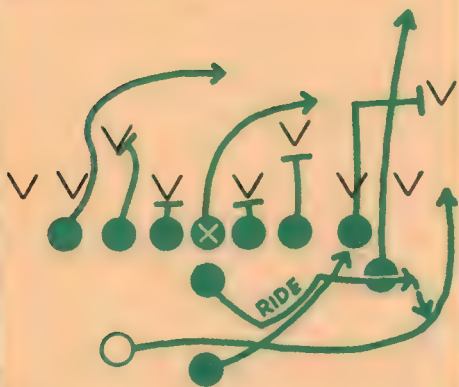
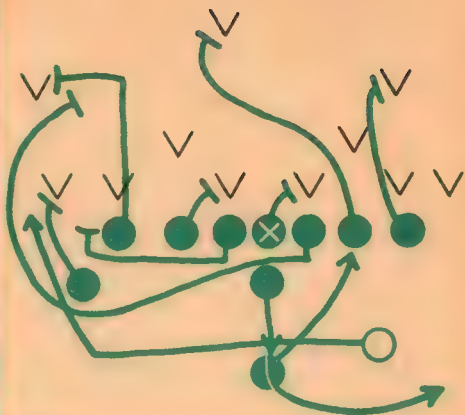
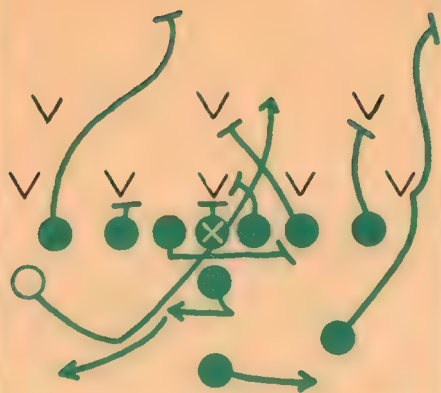


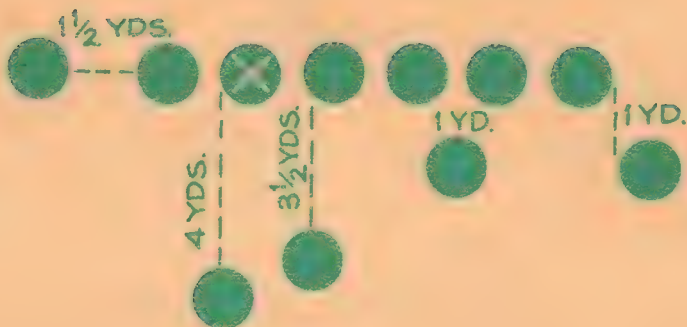
Wing **T**

BECOMING more and more popular every year, the Winged T combines the T with the single wing. In fact, it's more single wing than T.

It gets its name from the wingback who lines up one yard out and one foot back of the end on either side. The fullback sets up usually four yards behind the center, while the other halfback may take any one of several positions. His most popular spot is on a line back of the tackle, with his heels on line with the fullback's toes.

The line is balanced, with guards split one foot from the center, tackles two feet from guards, and ends three feet from tackles.



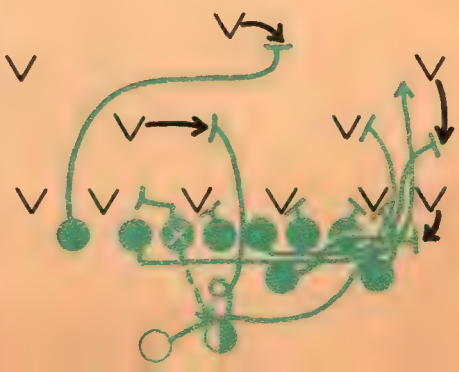
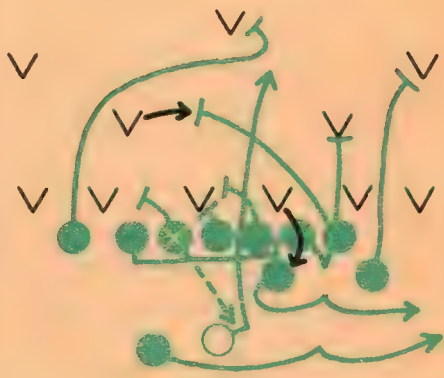
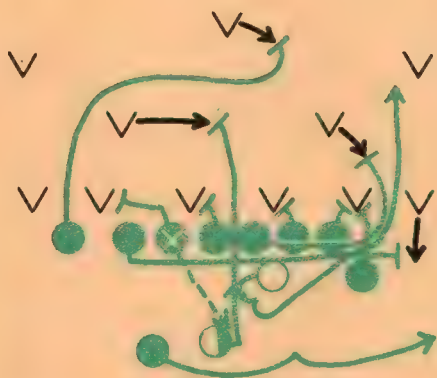
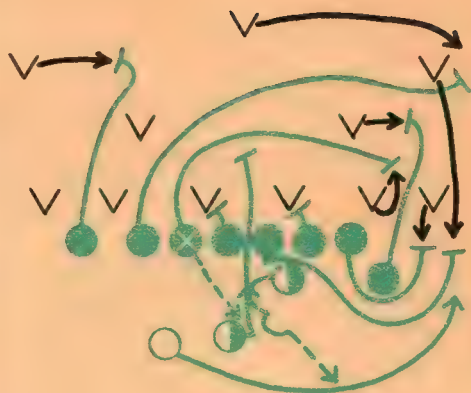
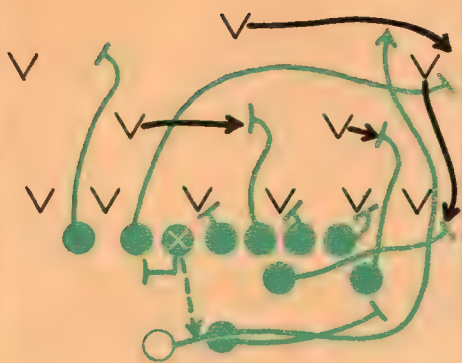


Single Wing

SINGLE WING teams line up in many different ways. One of the best is shown in the diagram. As you can see, the line is unbalanced with the left end split $1\frac{1}{2}$ yards from the guard. The other linemen set up shoulder to shoulder.

The wingback lines up a yard back and just outside the right end. The quarterback (blocking back) plays a yard back of the seam between the outside tackle and guard. The fullback sets up about $3\frac{1}{2}$ yards behind the center and inside tackle, while the tailback sets up a little farther back in the seam between the left guard and center.

In positioning your players for this system, put your fastest men in the guard spots. Speed is needed to pull out on a lot of the plays.



Team Defense

MODERN team defense is a tricky thing, indeed. Most teams shift from one defense to another, with different men jumping in and out of the line.

The important point to remember is this: It's wise to use only one or two basic defenses all year. It's far better to master just two defenses than to bungle a half dozen.

Other important points to remember include:

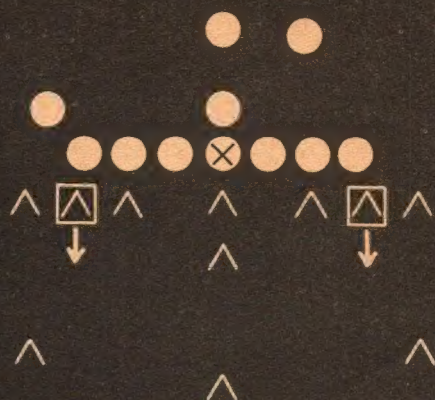
1. Adjust your defense from week to week to meet the strength of the opponents you're playing.
2. Once the strength of the opponents' formation is decided, take steps to stop its best players and plays.
3. Place your own players in the positions they can be most effective. In short, give your strongest defensive players the most responsibility and your weaker players the least.
4. During the course of the game, set your defense on each down according to the situation—the down, yardage to go, position of the ball on the field, the score, time left to play, and the weather conditions.

The defenses needed to meet specific situations include the following:

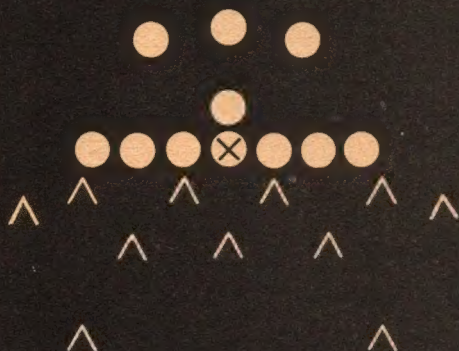
1. A standard, all-purpose defense.
2. A defense for short-yardage situations.



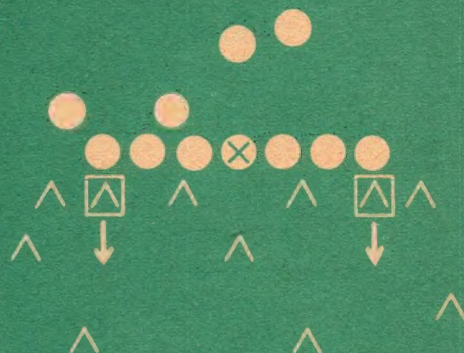
OKLAHOMA 5-4-2 VS. SPLIT T FORMATION



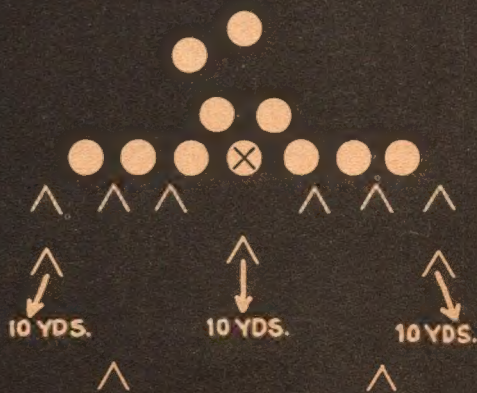
5-3-2-1 VS. WINGED T FORMATION



4-3-UMBRELLA VS. T FORMATION



4-3 ROTATED UMBRELLA
VS. SINGLE WING FORMATION



3. A basic defense for passing situations.
4. A goal line defense whenever the opponents drive within your five-yard line.

Some of the outstanding team defenses are outlined in the following diagrams. Regardless of which ones you choose, each member of your team must take on definite responsibilities. In most situations, the line protects territory and strips the interference on running plays. They also rush the passer.

Linebackers plug holes in the line, make most of the tackles, and defend against short passes.

Halfbacks protect against passes and help on running plays, especially wide ones.

The safety man looks for the "home run ball"—the long scorer. He protects against deep passes and makes sure tackles on ball-carriers heading for the goal.

If your team is just starting out and has no coach, keep your defenses and assignments as simple as possible. Avoid anything confusing. A simple mix-up in assignments can cost you the ball game.

Try your best to get a coach to set up the defenses for you. This is a most important phase of football and you need "the voice of experience" to aid you.



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